



**District of Columbia Department of Transportation  
Connecticut Avenue, NW Reversible Lane Operations & Safety Study  
Minutes from Community Advisory Committee Meeting No. 3  
Thursday, October 1, 2020 - 6:30 p.m.**

**ATTENDEES (Alphabetically by Last Name)**

DDOT Team

Samuel Brooks, State and Regional Planning  
Austina Casey, Environmental Program Manager  
Michael Goodno, Bicycle Program Specialist  
Donise Jackson, Ward 3 Community Engagement Representative  
Ellen Jones, Chief Project Delivery Officer  
Cynthia Lin, Deputy Project Manager with the Project Planning Branch - Planning & Sustainability Division  
Kirti Rajpurohit, Environmental Policy Analyst for the Planning & Sustainability Division  
Ed Stollof, Project Manager with the Project Planning Branch - Planning & Sustainability Division  
Ghirmay Tesfamichael, Infrastructure Project Management Division, Civil/Structural Engineer  
Yvonne Thelwell, Infrastructure Project Management Division, Supervisory Civil Engineer

Community Advisory Committee Members

David Cristeal, ANC 3F01  
Robert Deyling, Chair of the ANC 3F Streets & Sidewalks Committee  
Beau Finley, ANC 3C04  
Chris Fromboluti, ANC 3G07  
Eileen McCarthy, Chair of the Pedestrian Advisory Council (PAC)  
Tom Quinn, ANC 3E04  
Lee Brian Reba, ANC 3C01  
Josh Rising, ANC W3BA  
Randy Speck, ANC 3G03

Project Team

Charlotte Ducksworth, Partner with Commun-ET (Public Engagement Specialist)  
Michael Glickman, Project Manager with AMT Engineering  
Sabrina Hamm, Transcriptionist with Commun-ET (Public Engagement Specialist)  
Ian Swain, Partner with Commun-ET (Public Engagement Specialist)

**I. Call to Order**

Ed Stollof called the third meeting of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to order at 6:34 p.m. on Thursday, October 1, 2020. The meeting was convened via Microsoft Teams due to the social distancing requirement mandated by COVID-19.

## II. Introductions

Mr. Stolof welcomed all attendees to the CAC meeting. He then presented a refresher regarding use of the Microsoft Teams platform and summarized the meeting's agenda. Introductions were made by each CAC member.

## III. Project Updates

- A. moveDC: Samuel Brooks reported DDOT is updating its long-range transportation plan for Washington, D.C. The purpose is to streamline goals to inform policies, strategies, and performance criteria for project selection; and to influence plans for investments and improvements to the transportation network over the coming 20 years - including investments in public transit; bicycle and pedestrian amenities; freight and passenger vehicles; and equity. DDOT is set to move into the public involvement phase. A survey will be launched on Tuesday, October 6<sup>th</sup>. Two virtual townhall meetings will be held - one each on Tuesday, October 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m., and Thursday, October 15<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m. For those who do not have Internet access or have technological difficulties, telephone office hours will be made available on Tuesday, October 20<sup>th</sup>; Thursday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>; Tuesday, October 27<sup>th</sup>; and Wednesday, October 28<sup>th</sup>. More information is available via the new website (WeMoveDC.org). D.C. residents may also reach out to the two Project Managers - Haley Peckett and Lezlie Rupert - at [MoveDC@dc.gov](mailto:MoveDC@dc.gov) to obtain more information.

Mr. Rising inquired whether a comparison tool will be used to show the progress of the moveDC plan. Mr. Brooks stated a great deal had been accomplished since the 2014 plan, and information will be presented during the town hall meetings and on the moveDC website.

- B. Cleveland Park Streetscape & Drainage Improvement Project: Ghirmay Tesfamichael (Project Manager for the study) presented a summary of the project that runs from Macomb Street, NW to Quebec Street, NW. The project was designed to address the streetscape design, drainage improvement design, roadway improvements, upgrading the ADA ramps, traffic and pedestrian safety improvements, upgrading traffic signals, lighting, signage, and pavement markings. The design phase began in July 2016 and was completed in fall 2020. The solicitation process is underway. Depending upon funding, the solicitation will be advertised in FY 2021 for construction to begin during the winter of 2021. Challenges to the project include utility conflicts and drainage overflow to the project area. Barring any setbacks, construction will be completed in summer 2022. The project budget (encompassing both design and construction) is \$20 million.

Eileen McCarthy asked whether DDOT can provide specific details regarding upgrades to the traffic signals. Mr. Tesfamichael stated one of the goals of the project is to implement traffic and pedestrian safety improvements. To that end, the Connecticut Avenue traffic signals at Ordway and Porter Streets will be modified.

Beau Finley asked what changes had been implemented since the project was presented in 2019. Mr. Tesfamichael said there were no changes made to the project since it was presented in 2019. However, DDOT has noted work will need to be done to address utility conflicts with D.C. Water & Sewer's utility lines.

Mr. Tesfamichael placed his email address into the chat box for the benefit of those persons with additional questions.

- C. Purpose and Need: Mr. Stolof explained the purpose of the Connecticut Avenue, NW Reversible Lane Operations & Safety Study is to improve multimodal safety and operations, and to enhance multimodal options by removing or modifying the reversible lane system and/or adding protected bicycle lanes.

Competing needs include safety for motorized and non-motorized users, traffic operations, curbside parking and loading, transit access and operations, and bicycle and pedestrian accessibility.

- D. Guiding Principles: Mr. Stollof summarized the guiding principles for the project concerning traffic operations, parking and loading, pedestrians and bicycles, transit, and ROW/construction.
- E. Stakeholder Meetings to Date: Mr. Stollof highlighted the stakeholder meetings DDOT has held since April 30, 2020. Meetings have been held with various ANCs, citizens associations, agencies, organizations, educational institutions, and the Community Advisory Committee.
- F. Overview of Project Comments: Mr. Stollof presented an overview of the comments and statistics received to date. A total of 84 unique responses were submitted during summer of 2020. DDOT recorded 63 official responses and captured 21 unofficial comments via social media. A total of 268 unique comments have been noted, and 513 issues were raised by way of those comments. Of the major issues raised, the topics included the reversible lanes; transit; travel lane dimensions; pedestrians; scooters; parking; loading; speeding; left turns; safety; signage; traffic operations; multimodalism/quality of life; and the protected bicycle lanes.

Eileen McCarthy expressed the opinion that comments regarding “speeding” and “safety” should not be separated in DDOT’s findings.

Randy Speck noted his comments were not reflected in the summary of comments presented by DDOT. Mr. Speck suggested - regarding the “Safety of Motorized and Non-Motorized Users” under the “Project Needs” category - that DDOT should compare the amount of traffic present during the reversible lane hours. Mr. Stollof stated DDOT will look into the suggestion and report back.

Josh Rising noted, on the “Guiding Principles” slide under the “Traffic Operations” heading, that the statement of “Traffic must be maintained” is a definitive, declarative statement. Mr. Stollof stated DDOT will review the language and consider possible adjustments. Mr. Rising noted there has been no solicitation of public comments. Mr. Stollof and Ms. Ducksworth explained there were extensive comments from the public included in the data that were submitted via email and posted to the website. In addition, multiple stakeholder meetings were held throughout the summer and a public meeting is forthcoming in December.

Beau Finley said the statement that “Traffic must be maintained” is in direct opposition to the purpose of the Community Advisory Committee. Ms. McCarthy agreed, and said the statement is entirely inconsistent with Vision Zero.

Robert Deyling noted diversion might be directed to other arterials rather than the neighboring streets. Mr. Deyling suggested further defining the language concerning “significant impact”.

Chris Fromboluti raised the importance of preventing diversion onto other streets in the neighborhood.

#### **IV. Protected Bike Lane (PBL) Infrastructure Bike Forecast Methodology**

Michael Goodno explained the purpose of the forecast methodology is to project bicycle demand along the Connecticut Avenue, NW corridor for the coming five years; and to develop short-term and long-term forecasts. The methodology includes use of the cycle streets routing algorithm; data sources such as Capital Bikeshare (CaBi), historic bike count data, and Connecticut Avenue bike counts; and adjustments for the most direct route, the most comfortable route, and a balanced route.

Randy Speck asked if a bell curve can be obtained for bike trips over the entire day and seasons. The PBL forecasts are based on re-routed trips/current data and induced demand.

Mr. Stolof inquired whether a bell curve can be compiled for daily bicycle trips. Mr. Goodno replied in the affirmative and stated there are also 17 automated bicycle counters that are operational 24 hours per day.

Randy Speck asked whether bell curves can be provided for bike trips over an entire day, as well as for seasons. Mr. Goodno responded in the affirmative and offered to provide that information.

Tom Quinn noted there are major differences between Connecticut Avenue and 15<sup>th</sup> Street and asked whether those differences were considered in light of the cycling scenarios. Mr. Goodno stated Mr. Quinn's points would be considered.

Josh Rising stated the baseline is depressed concerning bike ridership along Connecticut Avenue. Mr. Goodno agreed, but explained that the model also takes into account people biking on the parallel streets. That information was taken from the Capital BikeShare data.

Mr. Goodno placed his email address into the chat box for the benefit of those persons with additional questions.

#### **V. Origins and Destinations - Select Locations Along Connecticut Avenue**

Ms. Lin highlighted details of a graphic that showed three data points along the Connecticut Avenue corridor, including north of Military Road, Van Ness to Upton, and South of Calvert Street. The graphic provided an overview of who is traveling along the corridor. The key takeaway is that 40% to 50% of those vehicles in the Corridor are pass through traffic.

#### **VI. Curbside Business Survey - Draft Results**

Ms. Lin summarized the results of the curbside business survey that was sent to several commercial stakeholders along the Connecticut Avenue corridor in mid-September 2020. Responses were received from 30 businesses.

- The majority of the respondents (54%) were from businesses in Cleveland Park. DDOT took note of the number of employees by use, including restaurants, residential businesses, general businesses, and special use businesses such as salon and entertainment businesses.
- The employee modes of transportation used to reach those locations indicated that 40% of respondents' employees drove alone or carpooled, and 30% of their employees used transit.
- The estimated customer modes of transportation indicated that the respondents believed 42% of their patrons drive alone or carpool, while 27% walk or bike.
- With regard to off-street parking, Cleveland Park seems to offer the lowest number of off-street parking options. Approximately half of the respondents stated they have alley access, while one-fourth of the businesses who responded do not have a dedicated loading berth or dock.

- More than half of the businesses receive a minimum of one or two deliveries each day, with restaurants and residential respondents receiving up to three to five deliveries per day. Deliveries are concentrated during early-morning and mid-morning hours.
- Regarding delivery pickups and drop-offs (PUDOs), 41% of respondents indicated they have less than 15 PUDOs, while 31% indicated their business does not require pickups and drop-offs. Approximately 43% of respondents indicated they have less than 15 passenger pickups and drop-offs destined to or from their business via Uber, Lyft, taxi, etc.; while another 36% of the respondents were uncertain how customers reached their location.
- DDOT asked the businesses to respond to two hypothetical questions. The first was, “If curbside loading was no longer available on Connecticut Avenue, NW, what would your business do to address loading needs?” The main responses included having loading take place from a side street or alley, or that the business owner was uncertain what action they would take. The second question was, “If parking was eliminated along Connecticut Avenue, what would you expect your employees and customers to do?” The majority of respondents indicated such an arrangement would be detrimental to their business; stated the employees and customers could use side streets or alleys; indicated off-street parking options were available; or expressed uncertainty about their expectation.

Mr. Finley inquired whether the Firehook Bakery responded to the survey. Ms. Lin stated Firehook was not a respondent.

Ms. McCarthy noted the Connecticut Avenue restaurants she patronizes have never asked about her mode of transportation and asked whether any of the restaurants made assumptions about how their customers are reaching them. Ms. Lin stated that some respondents likely assumed or estimated their responses.

Mr. Deyling asked whether the survey addressed the fact that restaurants lose five hours of parking during the reversible lane hours. Ms. Lin believed most of the respondents took that fact into account.

Mr. Quinn stated DDOT conducted a survey of mode shares in Cleveland Park when they were looking at the service lane a few years prior, and only 20% of shoppers were arriving via car.

## **VII. Competing Priorities - Consideration of Alternatives**

Mr. Stollof asked the CAC members what they and their constituents likely see as the two biggest priorities for the Connecticut Avenue, NW corridor. The most frequently mentioned priorities included safety and quality of life. Other responses included bicycle safety and access; reducing speed; making time and space for pedestrians; improving the quality of life for those who live on Connecticut Avenue; corridor safety; pedestrian safety; upholding the goals indicated in Vision Zero; and eliminating the reversible lanes.

Ms. Lin presented the path forward for narrowing down the four build concepts. Based on what has been studied and discussed to date, DDOT recommends eliminating Concepts A and D. Fatal flaws DDOT noted for Concept A include offering only one lane in the off-peak direction; and bus conflicts in the outside travel lanes during loading and unloading. Fatal flaws noted by DDOT for Concept D included pedestrian and cycling conflicts in the two-way cycle track, as well as left-turn traps/conflicts. In addition, DDOT does not support the Cleveland Park Smart Growth concept since it goes outside of the 60-foot curb-to-curb roadway width as well as impacts to the Cleveland Park Streetscape and Drainage Project. DDOT recommends continuing to consider Concepts B and C.

Preliminary Recommendations from the Project Management Team included:

1. Eliminating Concepts A and D.
2. Retaining Concept B.

3. Considering options to modify Option C that contain loading, pick-up/drop-off zones, and overnight parking with several locations along Connecticut Avenue.
4. Including spot improvements to Concepts B and C (e.g., pedestrian, transit, signalization)
5. Extending the protected bicycle lane alternatives in the vicinity of Northampton Street, NW.
6. Avoiding options that would extend the project beyond the 60-foot, curb-to-curb roadway width.

Beau Finley noted the Cleveland Park Smart Growth concept includes a service road, and the service road is only two blocks long. He indicated the plan is not meant for the entire corridor. Rather, it is for Connecticut Avenue in front of the Uptown between Ordway and Newark. Therefore, he believed the issues raised concerning the Metro entrance do not apply.

Tom Quinn inquired whether left-hand turns will be prohibited in the three commercial areas. Mr. Stolof said DDOT is evaluating which intersections should allow left turns.

## **VIII. Next Steps**

Ms. Lin summarized the next steps in the timeline. DDOT will hear from the consultant team on the traffic operations analysis regarding tradeoffs and the development of an evaluation matrix comparing alternatives. DDOT and the project team will prepare for holding a public meeting and will prepare for a fourth CAC meeting and an interagency meeting in November. Plans will be made to hold the first public meeting in mid-December. DDOT may move forward with a preferred concept in Winter 2021. From February to April 2021, a detailed Traffic Operations Analysis will be performed, and the 10% concept design may begin. Environmental documentation will then be performed sometime between February and June 2021.

## **IX. Public Meeting Logistics**

Ms. Ducksworth summarized the public meeting logistics and sought the CAC's feedback concerning whether to hold one daytime public meeting and one evening public meeting, or to hold one public meeting on Thursday, December 10<sup>th</sup>. Most of the CAC members who offered feedback via the chat spoke in favor of holding two public meetings. Ms. Ducksworth stated another CAC meeting will also be held either in October or November 2020.

Ms. Ducksworth also sought CAC members' input concerning whether to drop off meeting announcement (rack) cards to community stakeholders given the pandemic; and sought input regarding how to engage those who may not have digital access to attend the public meetings.

Mr. Stolof asked the CAC members to submit their feedback regarding the questions raised by Ms. Ducksworth, and about the presentation overall, within the coming two weeks. Ms. Ducksworth stated DDOT and Commu-ET will respond via email to any additional questions raised by members of the CAC and will ensure the presentation is sent to CAC members for review and comment prior to placing the PowerPoint on the website.

## **X. Additional CAC Member Feedback**

Josh Rising sought clarity about the standards that made Concept D unfeasible and asked whether any revisions could be made to Concept D that would help it remain a viable option. Mr. Stollof stated that we need to maintain the No-Build option as an environmental requirement to understand baseline future conditions.

Beau Finley reported two of the fatal flaws noted for Concept D are also applicable to the “No Build” option. He therefore inquired whether the “No Build” option is also being recommended for elimination. (2) Mr. Finley asked why the study is being limited to the 60-foot strip of right-of-way. Mr. Stollof explained the project was scoped not to require a reconstruction outside of the curb.

Robert Deyling stated there does not seem to be any rationale for supporting the approval of a “No Build” concept.

Tom Quinn asked whether DDOT was presently requesting comments only from CAC members regarding the latest presentation. Ms. Ducksworth replied in the affirmative.

## **XI. Adjournment**

The October 1, 2020 CAC meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.